

Breathing deeply

Belarusian surgeons second in the world to perform complex lung transplant

By Yevgeny Mikhnenko

We take our lung function for granted but, of course, viruses, infections, pollution and stress can affect our ability to breathe freely. Belarusian surgeons have been successfully operating on patients with severe lung problems for several years now but the latest surgery, performed on Vadim Nikolaevich, 58, is a landmark event.

Just three weeks ago, he had no idea of even needing surgery. However, the discovery of a tumour in his left lung requiring immediate surgery, and another lump in the right lung, left no time to waste. The Department of Thoracic Surgery and Lung Transplantation at the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of Organ and Tissue Transplants decided to attempt one of the world's most complex operations: autologous transplantation of basal segments of the lower lobe of the lung. It was the first such operation in Belarus.

"Usually, in such cases, the entire affected organ is removed by pneumonectomy," explains Sergey Yeskov, who heads the department. "In this situation, we could not do so, since both lungs were affected. We had to save at least part of the left lung at all costs... so we did."

The affected organ was removed from the chest cavity, allowing the upper lobe and the



Technical support for conducting operations is important, but not so as surgeons' skills

sixth segment of the lower lobe to be cut away. The remaining, smaller lung would be able to operate, and was replaced into the pleural cavity. Nine surgeons took part over the six-hour operation while a similar number are being involved in Vadim's rehabilitation.

"The operation was technically difficult since the lung was

almost halved in size, making it tricky to return it to its original location in the chest," Ms. Yeskov tells us. "We had to match up bronchi with different diameters and connect the pulmonary artery to the central part of the vessel, using scraps of segmental arteries. We sewed a lower pulmonary vein directly into the left atrium."

The only other nation to attempt such an operation is Japan, which was the first to risk the surgery, working on part of the lung.

"The department has existed for only three months, but has already conducted rare, high-tech operations," Mr. Yeskov asserts proudly. "We're ready to help not only fellow citizens, but foreigners."

Image for many years

Mosaic of Budslav Mother of God appears in Nazareth

"The Holy Land has given permission for the installation of a mosaic of the Budslav Icon of the Mother of God, in the Sanctuary of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Nazareth," the Roman Catholic Church has announced.

The Metropolitan of Minsk and Mogilev, Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz, has met the Belarusian masters being engaged on the composition of the 2m tall and 70cm wide mosaic, which is to feature the Budslav Basilica below an image of the Mother of God.

The main project co-ordinator is Father Vladislav Zavalnyuk — a prior of the Church of St. Simon and Helen (the Red Church) in Minsk. 2013 is the 400th anniversary of the Budslav icon, with the Roman Catholic Church in Belarus planning various celebrations, including the arrival of the papal legate.

The Sanctuary of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Nazareth is home to mosaic images of the Madonna donated by Nepal, Greece, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Poland and other nations.

Eager to take up mantle as book publishing capital

Minsk applies to be World Book Capital in 2017



At 20th Minsk International Book Fair

By Lyudmila Ivanova

Following the 20th Minsk International Book Fair, Belarus' Deputy Information Minister, Lilia Ananich, asserts that Belarus' spiritual life has been brought to the level of information policy.

"It was not the number of events which was the most important at the fair (an impressive 270 during

the jubilee forum) but the fact that Belarus demonstrated its high level of national book culture, spirituality and statehood. Our spiritual culture and legacy match our state information policy and ideology," underlines the First Deputy Minister.

2012 was the Year of Book, showing Belarus' commitment to book publishing and the promotion of reading; over 11,000 books were

released in the Republic, with a total circulation of about 34 million copies. Naturally, the best editions went on show at the recent fair, including such landmark editions as a copy of the 12th century Polotsk Gospel — the first Belarusian book and one of the most ancient and precious to date. The recent Minsk Book Fair gathered a record number of guests and participants, from 25 countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Venezuela, Germany, India, Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, China, Cuba, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, the USA, Finland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine and France — plus Palestine and Serbia for the first time. The National BelExpo Exhibition Centre housed over 600 stands, including about 400 from Belarus.

Following the 20th International Book Fair, Minsk is applying for the title of World Book Capital in 2017 — when it will be celebrating the 500th anniversary of the first Belarusian language book being published by our fellow countryman, Frantsisk Skorina — a famous eastern Slavonic printer and enlightener.

Mir's 500,000th visitor

Since restoration was completed in 2011, Mir Castle has been visited by 500,000 people. The anniversary visitor was bank employee Tatiana Voitovich, from Russian Kaliningrad, on February 2nd. She has received a commemorative ticket and a voucher for free entry for four people in 2013.

"The popularity of our permanent and thematic exhibitions is growing," smiles the Director of the Mir Castle Complex Museum, Olga Popko — a Candidate of Historical Sciences. "We expected to see the 500,000th visitor in March and were preparing for this landmark event, but we underestimated the attraction of Mir at home and abroad. As a result, our honoured guest arrived at the former princes' residence early."

This year, on April 1st, it will be two years since the museum acquired independent status. Previously, it was a branch of the National Art Museum of Belarus.

Ancient skills in demand

By Darya Kurilova

Church domes produced by Novopolotsk crew



The Archbishop of Polotsk and Glubokoe, Feodosy, recently employed a team of specialist Novopolotsk metalworkers to create a new dome for St. Tikhon's church, in Farinovo. The eparchy boasts 126 churches, many of which are undergoing restoration and repair, often requiring new domes. Expert craftsmen are, unsurprisingly, in short supply.

Andrey Makarov, who holds Novopolotsk's city labour award, *Gifted Hands*, headed the crew. He has worked at the Vitebsk kreastavratsiya enterprise for several years and took just three weeks to complete the 4.9m high and 4.5m diameter dome, which has since been consecrated. Another dome — for the bell tower — has now been ordered.